have to / don't have to

Have To and Don’t Have To – Use

• We use have to to talk about strong obligation that comes from somewhere else, for example from your boss, your parents, a rule at school or work.

Examples:

I have to be home by ten. (My parents told me so.)
I must be home by ten. I have a very difficult day tomorrow. (It is my own decision.)

I have to get up early, because I start work at 8. (It is a rule.)
I should get up early. (Now I stay in bed until lunchtime.)

• Don’t have to means that there isn’t any obligation at all, there is no need to do it.

Don’t have to is different from shouldn’t and mustn’t.

Examples:

- I don’t have to get up early at weekend.
  (I can stay in bed as long as I want.)
- You mustn’t tell lies. (It is very bad to tell lies.)
- You don’t have to go with me.
  (You can go with me if you want to.)
- You shouldn’t smoke. (It is bad for your health.)

• In spoken British English you can also use have got to and haven’t got to.

Examples:

Pamela is a waitress. She’s got to work at weekends.
Have I got to do it right now?
I haven’t got to take my sister to school, my parents do it.
Tip! We do not use **have to** when we talk about what is a good idea to do, but we don’t do it yet. Instead, we use **should**.

- **Have to** is a construction (structure). It is not a modal verb, it is a *semi-modal*. We use auxiliary verbs *do* and *does* to form questions and negatives.

**Examples:**

*Positive*

*I have to* work very unsociable hours.

*She has to* wear a uniform.

*Negative*

*I don’t have to* work at weekends.

*John doesn’t have to* do any work at home.

*Question*

*Do I have to* pay in advance?

*Does your father have to* travel a lot at his job?

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**Have To and Don’t Have To - Practice**

Choose **have to** / **has to** or **don’t have to** / **doesn’t have to**.

1. **Every man** .......... *do* military service in my country. It’s obligatory.

2. **When do we** .......... *pay* for the next term?

3. **Policemen** .......... *wear* a uniform.

4. **A pilot** .......... *train* for many years.

5. **Does Susan** .......... *work* long hours?

6. **I** .......... *get up early on Sundays. I can stay in bed.*

7. **You have** .......... *a visa to come to Ukraine.*

8. **You** .......... *to do it if you don’t want to.*

9. **My daughter** .......... *to cook, because I cook for the whole family.*

10. **We** .......... *pay. It's free.*
**Must - Have to**

*Must and have to* both express obligation. However, they are used differently depending on who imposes the obligation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MUST</th>
<th>HAVE TO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The speaker thinks it is necessary.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Someone else thinks it is necessary.</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- I must buy flowers for my mother. (It’s her birthday and I decide to do that).
- "You must take more exercise" says the doctor. (The doctor thinks it is necessary).
- I must ask my secretary to book a flight for me. (It is important for me not to forget.)
- "Dogs must be kept on a lead" (Written on a sign in the park = a rule which must be respected).

- I have to buy flowers for my mother-in-law. (It is not my decision - my husband asked me to do it.)
- I have to take more exercise. (doctor’s orders!)
- I have to call the travel agency. (My boss asked me to book a flight.)
- I have to keep my dog on a lead. (That’s what the sign tells me to do.)

**N.B. In the negative form, the meaning changes!**

<p>| MUST NOT (MUSTN'T) | DO NOT HAVE TO (DON'T HAVE TO) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You <strong>mustn’t</strong> tell George</th>
<th>You don’t have to tell George</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>= <strong>it’s important</strong> not to tell George</td>
<td>= you can tell George if you like, but it isn’t necessary. It’s your decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= <strong>don’t</strong> tell George</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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